1814. 1895.

# ANNUAL ADDRESS

OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE

# Lundy's Lane Historical Society

## JULY 25th, 1895.

*Members and Friends :*

WE are happy to greet you in annual convention on this memorable hill very sacred in memories as the resting place of many brave defenders of this land eighty-four years ago, and since that time the resting place also of numerous people who have departed this life in hope according to God's word.

Since the formation of the Lundy's Lane Society each year has been marked with an increasing interest in its work and labor of love. Public sympathy is manifest. The cultivation and study of Canadian History now occupies a high place in our literary circles and educational institutions. This is as it should be. Proofs are not wanting. The Legislature of Ontario and the County Council of Welland have come forward with liberal donations to assist the work of the Society in publishing historical literature. Much credit is due to our representatives in the Provincial Parliament and in the County Council of Welland for their individual influence and in obtaining such aid to the Society from the public funds. Credit is also due to the members of the press in Welland for their constant and ready help in publishing hundreds of columns in their respective

papers relating to Canadian History and to the public proceedings of each anniversary at Lundy's Lane. But not only do our local papers lend their valuable aid, but we find that the press of the whole Province, without exception, has espoused the cause of promoting historical literature in a loyal and patriotic spirit.

But perhaps no greater proof of an awakened interest in the history of Canada can be afforded than in the erection of a national monument by the Dominion Government unveiled here to-day. It is a monument which tells of this Canadian Marathon in the past, and which shall help to preserve the memory of brave men who fell here for king and country. True, it is eighty-four years since, but memory has not forgotten those eventful times; it needed only to be directed that a monument of this kind might serve to attest a people's gratitude sacred to the memory of the officers and men of British Regular Regiments, Canadian Militia and Indian Warriors who on this spot, crowned with victory, fell in defence of Canada on the 25th July, 1814, as our distinguished poet of Niagara has happily expressed the fact for us to-day:

"This trophy fair of sculptured stone will show
"Forever in the fight of glory how
"Britain and Canada stood fast that night
"At Lundy's Lane, and conquered for the right."

A further proof of an awakened interest in Canada and her history is in the fact that other national monuments like this have been recently erected at other battle grounds of 1812-14 in this country.

LAURA SECORD MONUMENT.

The Society cherishes the hope that very shortly a suitable monument will be erected at the grave of the heroine of June 24, 1813. We need not here repeat the story oft told. Women of Ontario are now asked to contribute a small sum each to a fund for raising a memorial of her heroism in averting bloodshed and giving a turning point in warfare, resulting in the safety of Upper Canada in the War of 1812-14.

NIAGARA OF 1783.

The L. L. H. S. has long held the name of NIAGARA, on the Canada side of the river, in sacred estimation. It was the great landing place not of pilgrims, but of refugees, in 1783, called ever since "United Empire Loyalists." They had fled for safety from the perils of the Revolution, from the Hudson River, some to New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, etc., and some to the British Fort Niagara at that time, thence across the river to find for themselves a new home in forest lands They landed just where the town of Niagara now stands. There they witnessed a good confession, "the fear of God and honor to the King," with thanksgiving for present safety and hope for their future. Bibles and prayer books, and in a few instances the sacred vessels used in the church's service, were their chief goods. The Lundy's Lane Society therefore points to Niagara as a place which ought to be chosen for the erection of a National Memorial of great significance which should never be forgotten. It was the landing place of thousands of loyal refugees to the Niagara Peninsula. where they began to found a new colony henceforth to be called British Americans, or Canadians under the Flag of the Old Red Cross, the only flag for Canada.

NEW PUBLICATIONS OF THE SOCIETY.

A second edition of "The Fight in the Beechwoods" or the Surrender at Beaverdams in 1813, has recently been

issued. It is intended to publish very shortly "The Annals of Niagara," or its history from its origin, including a period of nearly 300 years, by W. Kirby, F. R. S., Niagara. This will be a volume of over 100 pages of unusual interest. It is also intended to publish very shortly "Drummond's Winter Campaign of 1813" and "Documentary Papers of 1812-14," never before published, both by Capt. Cruikshank, Fort Erie, Ont.

### JOINT MEETING OF THE LITERARY SOCIETY OF THE STAMFORD HIGH SCHOOL AND THE L. L. H. S.

A very pleasant and profitable meeting was held on 22nd Feb. last, under the auspices of these societies, in the capacious concert room of the High School. It was a great success. Besides the rendering of vocal and instrumental music by the students, two admirable papers were read by High School Principal Reaveley and Rev. P. L. Spencer, of Thorold. The subjects were: "Our Flag, and why we Unfurl it," and "The Discovery of America by John Cabot in 1497." This joint-meeting has given rise to the thought that other similar societies might with advantage do likewise.

If history be "philosophy teaching by example," who does not see that it is the noblest study to which we can devote ourselves? Sacred history is first and foremost. But all history is a commentary on the actions of mankind, and cannot be safely neglected. It is the voice ever sounding across the centuries and proclaiming the eternal distinction between right and wrong, or, as someone has said, "In history we see written in the largest characters the impressive lessons of duty to our fellow-men."

The Christian carries religion into his patriotism, but not his patriotism into religion. The things of God are too holy and sacred with him either to be mixed with or truckle to the little, low politics, the narrow partizanship of men. The Christian is the citizen of a better country, and a pilgrim in all others, though a peculiar and public friend to that in which he was born, or to the land of his adoption.

### THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

This is a subject of intense interest. We know too little about it. While all honor is due to the heroic Columbus in reaching St. Salvador, an island of the West Indies, in 1492, it is not generally known that Henry VII had been arranging with him as a navigator in the interest of England, but he was suddenly and privately influenced to act for Spain instead. It is not generally known that England manifested the first desire for discovering new lands, and failing in that effort, she persevered in another by equipping five vessels or more under John Cabot, a Venetian by birth, but a resident of Bristol, Eng., who with his three sons first succeeded in discovering the mainland of America, June 24, 1497, and whose son Sebastian in following years discovered the southern shores of North America.

Looking back through successive periods since those early days we now are made to see and feel devoutly, and to exclaim, "Behold what great things the Lord's hand has wrought for his people." *Non nobis Domine.*

The commemoration of the discovery of America will, we trust, be worthily celebrated in the Maritime Provinces of Canada and in our own Ontario some time in 1897. The Provincial Association, we are sure, will cheerfully cooperate with the Canadian Institute, of

Toronto, in making arrangements for a fitting celebration of the Cabotian discovery, while the presence of the British Association from England during the exhibition in Toronto in 1897 will add lustre to the occasion and fame to this fairest province of Canada. For then it will be seen that the voice of the past is not altogether about the battles won in defence of this country and the severe privations endured in 1783 and 1812-14, but the quiet words and works of thoughtful God-fearing people in art, science and religion that have changed this land. It is the common History of Canada, "read between the lines," and has all the freshness and interest of a new Revelation. It is the tide of Christian civilization, influence and power which is steadily and surely developing this north portion of America into a Greater Britain, guided and guarded by an all-wise and over-ruling Providence.

Heartily we commend the excellent work done by kindred Historical Societies in Ontario. Each one is writing its share of local history. Their reports read at each annual Provincial Association ought to be very helpful in developing the strength of unity and the pleasure and usefulness of such literature to this and succeeding generations.

It cannot be too much to ask in behalf of the L. L. H. S., from every friend, for subscription of *One Dollar* annually to its fund for collecting material for printing and publishing pamphlets like those issued during the past eight years. The Society requires encouragement and help. Subscriptions or donations may be made payable to Jas. Wilson, Esq., C. E., Park Superintendent, Niagara Falls South P. O., Ont.